

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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16. SUMMARY: (C) This IR provides information covering the political motivation of, and degree of confidence bestowed by the President/Army Minister on each member of the new Army High Command. Copies of Recent photographs are also forwarded.

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21. This IR contains 8 pages

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22. (C) DETAILS:

a. (C) The following is a listing of the members of the Army High Command effective 31 Mar 79, together with comments gathered from the sources regarding each one's political activism/motivation and where each one stands in the estimation of President Figueiredo and/or the Army Minister.

(1) The Army Minister: General Walter PIRES de Carvalho e Albuquerque. Occupies a political position of cabinet rank. Said to be an alter ego of Figueiredo. Knows exactly how and why the President thinks, and is totally devoted to him. He has made it clear to the Army that any political activity not directed or cleared by him would result in punishment. Does nothing political without first consulting with Figueiredo. Will support whatever Figueiredo decides is in the nation's best interest as, e.g., the touchy issue of amnesty for ex-members of the Army. PIRES would accept this because he and Figueiredo both know that any cassated ex-military can be retired based on previous practice and their length-of-service. Will serve for as long as the President desires.

(2) The Army Chief of Staff: General SAMUEL Augusto Alves Correa. Will function as principal Army spokesman in political and professional matters a task PIRES has delegated to him. (PIRES dislikes making public speeches.) Has the fullest confidence of Figueiredo, politically and professionally. Served as political spokesman for GEISEL's Ex-Army Minister, General (Ret) Fernando Bethlem, in 1978 while still CG of the III Army in Porto Alegre. Was among the first four-star generals to publicly announce political support for FIGUEIREDO early in Jan 78. Will not tolerate dissention from his subordinates, is said to be a disciplinarian. Must retire during Jul 80. Occupies the senior active list position - the "first among equals" of the High Command.

(3) The Commanding General of I Army Rio de Janeiro: General GENTIL Marques Filho. Although once closely associated with the hardlining element in the Army, he has also been a lifelong - since military academy days - friend of the President. Not given to political pronouncements, he is a "yes sir, will do" sort of infantryman, who, upon winning promotion to four-stars on 31 Mar 79, quietly asked the Army Minister if he could answer reporters' questions touching on the political scene. (He received an affirmative reply, a sign of the high esteem PIRES holds for this professionally minded general.)

(4) The Commanding General of II Army, São Paulo: General José FRAGOMENT. Although he likes to regard himself as apolitical, but a solid supporter of the 1964 Revolution, he also spoke out early in 1978 in favor of FIGUEIREDO'S selection to succeed GEISEL in the presidency. Very popular with all segments of Paulista society, as well as in Rio and other places where he has served, this charming general can be tough on subordinates who get out of

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line. He can also be expected to make politically flavored speeches from time-to-time, to tactfully remind the residents of Brazil's most industrialized state, São Paulo, of the military's support for FIGUEIREDO. He enjoys FIGUEIREDO's, and PIRES', fullest confidence as well as their personal friendship. FRAGOMENI will have to retire on Mar 80.

(5) The Commanding General of III Army, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul: General Antonio BANDEIRA. He switched political groups in 1977, abandoning the antipolitical openings hardliners headed by the then Army Minister, General (Ret) SYLVIO FROTA, who was ~~unceremoniously~~ sacked on 12 Oct 77 by GEISEL. This changing of sides led to the decision of numerous generals with hard-lining tendencies to support GEISEL and his, at that time in formulation, political reforms. BANDEIRA, regarded as the Army's best field general, was sent South in part to keep him from getting involved in state politics. This would have happened had he gone North, to the IV Army area, which is where he hails from, and is said to command a personal following. His presence in the opposition party - strong (the MDB) III Army area also serves to remind any would-be political troublemaker that the Army was once rough on dissenters, and the Army's "roughest-of-the-rough" in those days, the 1960's - BANDEIRA is still around quietly observing the domestic political scene. Privately, however, BANDEIRA has told intimates that the days of repression are over and that he would prefer not to have to do more than make tough speeches, if directed to do so by the President (and he reportedly emphasized the word "President", not the Army Minister, to make sure that the listeners understood that whatever he does will be sanctioned by FIGUEIREDO. He must retire by Nov 80.

(6) The Commanding General of IV Army, Recife, Pernambuco: General Florimar CAMPELLO. Regarded as politically-wise and part of FIGUEIREDO's inner circle of politically trusted general-officer friends, he hails from the IV Army area but was sent there to command, a sign of the unusual degree of confidence the President and Army Minister have in him. So well trusted and regarded is he that he knew, even before his promotion on 31 Mar 79, that he was free to discuss the domestic political situation with reporters, unlike his two colleagues and fellow promotees, GENTIL and BENEDICTO. CAMPELLO openly admitted that the Army was, in fact, repressive until GEISEL's tenure, and that this would no longer be the case, saying that the Revolution was now in a political phase of transition towards full democracy, and the politicians now had to make the difficult decisions, not the generals. He also can be expected to periodically speak out on behalf of FIGUEIREDO and to serve as a voice of moderation in the High Command. CAMPELLO will retire in Jul 81.

(7) The Chief of the Personnel Department: General Antonio Carlos de ANDRADA SERPA. Easily the most politically minded of the High Command's members, he is connected by blood, upbringing and tradition to leading family and politicians of Minas Gerais. An ardent nationalist, he was perhaps the most

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active behind-the-scenes four-star general last year; (together with his older brother, now Armed Forces Chief) during the time when the as-yet a presidential nominee FIGUEIREDO, was busy lining up support for the openings - and himself - from among the High Command's members. He reportedly favors a combination of strong political conservatism and economic self-sufficiency and alone among the High CMD members wouldn't hesitate to discreetly criticize any political decisions/measures he finds not to his liking. However, he would not risk openly challenging the Minister or the President because he would not want to recreate the HUGO ABREU episode, i.e., when the Army was politically split and openly so - bad for its image as guarantor of the Revolution. In short, he is not afraid of the Army Minister and commands the respect of those hard-liners who now support the openings because "what else can one do without essentially damaging the Revolution's image", look for attempts on the Army Minister's part to ease him out of the High Command, most likely via a nomination to the Superior Military Tribunal, assuming that Gen RODRIGO OCTAVIO retires next month, or out of Brasilia. If not, SERPA will continue to be the one general whose voice will be heard from, whether the Army Minister likes it or not, because his political support helped carry the day for GEISEL back in the dark days of 1977, when FROTA seemed to be getting away with challenging the President. SERPA must doff his uniform by Mar 81.

(8) The Chief of the General Services Department: General RUY de Paula Couto. He represents the "yes sir, Yes sir, three bags full, sir" type of general, one who will do what he is asked to by the President and/or the Army Minister. Personable, likeable, and friendly, his personality is said to be his biggest asset. Has no political clout, nor does he reportedly want any, being content to wear the four-stars of a full general and bask in the honor resulting from membership on the High Command. In reference to his political beliefs, he is a conservative, supports the gradualist approach currently espoused by FIGUEIREDO and would, as previously indicated, not challenge his masters. RUY retires by Jul 81.

(9) The Chief of the Engineering and Communications Department: General Jose FERRAZ da Rocha. Another apolitical type of Revolutionary supporter, he prefers not to make political statements and would do so only if ordered by the President/Minister. Said to be moderate in his views vis-a-vis the Revolution. FERRAZ must leave the active service by Jul 81.

(10) The Chief of the Ordnance Department: General BENEDICTO Maia Pinto de Almeida. A popular figure within the Army's senior circles, he is a classmate of ex-Army Minister BETHLEM (class of 1934). Considered loyal to the Regime, he is another one of the High Command's members who would rather not have to make any political speeches. In short, is not politically motivated and will tend to his department's business of reoutfitting/supplying the Army with locally produced ordnance items such as tanks, artillery, trucks, munitions

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a tall order for a budget-poor Army. BENEDICTO will retire on Nov 81.

(11) The Chief of the Training and Research Department: General ERNANI Ayrosa da Silva. Shares, along with ANDRADA SERPA - but not to the same degree, a reputation for political activism but is more personal-following minded, having cultivated and encouraged a personal following from among young officers. Said to consider himself a liberal within the Revolutionary spectrum, but did not hesitate to crack down on students in the late 1960's in São Paulo (Operation Bandeirante). Feisty, the old bachelor has quarreled with flag officers who lack WWII combat records. (He himself holds Brazil's highest award for combat heroism, won in Italy in WWII, as well as medals for wounds received in combat actions) over the question of precedence. ERNANI thinks he should always receive top honors when on field trips and right after the Minister and Chief of Staff. Accepted the High Command's decision in Mar 78 to non-select him in order to promote FIGUEIREDO to four-star rank. This delayed his promotion to Nov 78. This "favor" has not been forgotten by FIGUEIREDO; however, even though ERNANI would rather command - he had requested either the I or II Armies earlier in the year - the President, based on the Army Minister's advise, hesitates to give the popular combat hero a chance to play warlord, even if this would be within limits acceptable to the regime. In sum, ERNANI has to be handled with kid gloves for personal, not political reasons, and might, yet get to command an army - perhaps shortly before he has to retire, say after FRAGOMENTI departs the II Army early in 1980. ERNANI must retire by Mar 81.

b. (e) Two other area commanders sit with the High Command but do not have the right to vote (this happens during the formulation of promotion lists, and at no other time). The two are:

(1) The CG of the Planalto/11th Military Region Command, Brasilia: MG Heitor Luiz Gomes de ALMEIDA. A FIGUEIREDO classmate, the businesslike and no-nonsense cavalryman is in charge of Army troops who, in fact, protect the President and the Army Headquarters complex - the "Pretorian Guard". In short, he enjoys the President's and Minister's fullest confidence and is not regarded as the sort to get involved in political activities.

(2) The CG of the Amazon/12th Military Command, Manaus, Amazonas: MG ROSALVO Eduardo Jansen. This scrappy field soldier does not like to even discuss political matters save to say that he supports the 1964 Revolution and its leaders. He, therefore, is cut along the lines of the majority of the High Command's newer members, i.e., professionally oriented and more interested in improving the quality of the Army than in getting involved in politics.

c. (e) Below are reproductions of photographs taken by the Army of the High Command's members early this month (Apr 79).

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- (1) Gen Walter PIRES - Army Minister
- (2) Gen SAMUEL - Chief of Staff
- (3) Gen GENTIL - CG I Army
- (4) Gen FRAGOMENI - CG II Army
- (5) Gen BANDEIRA - CG III Army
- (6) Gen CAMPELLO - CG IV Army
- (7) Gen ANDRADA SERPA - Personnel Dept
- (8) Gen RUY - General Services Dept
- (9) Gen FERRAZ - Engineering Dept
- (10) Gen BENEDICTO - Ordnance Dept
- (11) MG ALMEIDA - CG PLANALTO CMD
- (12) MG ROSALVO - CG Amazon CMD
- (13) Gen ERVANI - Training and Research Dept



GEN. WALTER PIRES



GEN. SAMUEL



GEN GENTIL

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GEN. FRAGORENZI



GEN. BANDEIRA



GEN. CAMPELLO



GEN. ANDRADA SERPA



GEN. RUY



GEN. FERRAZ



GEN. BENEDICTO



MG ALMEIDA



MG ROSALVO

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GEN. ERNANI

(C) ORIGINATOR'S COMMENTS:

1. It would appear, based on the information gathered, that this is the least politically motivated, or politically active High Command to be seen in a number of years.
2. Its members are evidently predisposed to agree with/accept whatever the Army Minister tells them, i.e., the President's wish.
3. With the possible but seemingly remote exception of the two generals with the biggest egos, the politically minded/involved Gen. SERPA and the personality-cult devotee ERNANI, none of the now High Command's members are likely to cause any political problems or embarrassments for the Administration.
4. Ideologically speaking, all possess solid Revolutionary credentials. None would care to be labeled a radical of either extreme. All are politically conservative.
5. FIGUEIREDO will probably cater to the generals' egos by going through the motions of obtaining a consensus, or of sounding them out, via the Army Minister, on the major issues.
6. To conclude, the High Command appears to be pretty much in FIGUEIREDO's camp, vis-à-vis the redemocratization, accepting this as necessary. Moreover, notwithstanding the radical/military past of some, e.g., BANDEIRA, it would be very difficult for any one with hardlining or predatory tendencies to successfully advocate arbitrary/plastic solutions to domestic problems, given the changing mood of the public, plus the absence of an IA-5 to provide legal cover.
7. POL MIL has seen.

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